



Credit: Jeff Hall

▲ A North Carolina project has residents logging alligator sightings online.

mapping project on iNaturalist, a website where hundreds of thousands of members log millions of wildlife observations. The data show alligators are most concentrated in urban coastal areas around Jacksonville and Wilmington near the South Carolina state line. The project is “part of our effort to improve management of alligators in the state,” said Alicia Davis, natural resource technician with the NCWRC. “Our goal was to establish a communication channel with people interested in alligators, a wider group than people who call us to get the alligator out of their garage or express interest in hunting alligators.” The program launched in early April. By late May, Davis said, 80 citizens had joined and contributed about 200 observations. The state is working with residents

to draft North Carolina’s first alligator management plan. *Source: NCWRC*

NORTHEAST

Plan lays out vision for Susquehanna watershed

The Susquehanna River is a critical waterway for the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Running from Cooperstown, N.Y., through the heart of Pennsylvania, it ends at Havre de Grace, Md., where it contributes nearly half the bay’s freshwater. A new document by the Chesapeake Conservancy maps out the waterway, as well as the hopes that residents along more than 700 miles of river have for the corridor. “Envision the Susquehanna: A Vision for the Susquehanna Watershed” resulted from more than three years of meetings with individuals, organizations and communities throughout the watershed with an eye toward improving water quality and wildlife habitat. “We set out to create a process for community engagement for the Susquehanna River,” said Joel Dunn, president and CEO of the Chesapeake Conservancy. “For us that means everybody is pitching in to achieve a conservation objective.” Priorities differed throughout the corridor, but some themes were consistent, according to the document, including a demand for better water quality and improved wildlife habitat. The process included the creation of detailed

maps that document lands adjacent to the waterway, parcel by parcel. Those maps have contributed to a tree-planting project in two Pennsylvania counties meant to restore the riparian forested buffers that once followed the river. Those are the sort of projects Dunn said he hopes to see up and down the river. “What’s good for the Susquehanna is good for the Chesapeake,” he said. “I think there are some really dramatic ramifications on the horizon.”

Source: Chesapeake Conservancy

CANADA

Committee recommends 25 species for at-risk list

A committee of experts has recommended adding 25 new plants and animals to Canada’s list of species at risk. At a meeting in late April, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) classified nine new species as endangered, three as threatened and 13 as warranting special concern, including the Okanagan population of Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) (endangered), lark bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) (threatened) and bullsnake (*Pituophis catenifer sayi*) (special concern). If accepted by the Canadian government, the new species would add to the 521 species already listed federally under the Species at Risk Act. “We have to put more resources into recovery to see the list decline and threats be reversed,” said COSEWIC chairman Eric Taylor, zoology professor at the University of British Columbia. The biggest threat facing Canada’s wildlife is habitat loss and degradation, although overharvest is also a concern, Taylor said, and climate change may exacerbate their effects. COSEWIC is made up of over 50 experts representing provinces and territories, federal agencies, Indigenous groups, academics and NGOs. Its biannual recommendations advise the federal government on which species to list under its Species at Risk Act and are in need of recovery programs. The committee deliberated over 33 Canadian plant and animal species. *Source: COSEWIC* ■

Contributed by David Frey, Julia John and Dana Kobilinsky.



Credit: Nicholas A. Tonelli/Flickr

▲ A new document lays out a vision for the Susquehanna River as it winds from Cooperstown, N.Y., to the Chesapeake Bay.